

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/700,592

Applicant(s)

SAKAMOTO ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Michael t. Tran

2827



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1.  This communication is responsive to the Rce and IDS filed August 29, 2005.

2.  The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-4 and 8-13.

3.  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)  All    b)  Some\*    c)  None    of the:

1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.

3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4.  A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5.  CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

(a)  including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached  
1)  hereto or 2)  to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

(b)  including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6.  DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1.  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2.  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3.  Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date 082905
4.  Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit  
of Biological Material
5.  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6.  Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
7.  Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8.  Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9.  Other \_\_\_\_\_.

  
MICHAEL TRAN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

## DETAILED ACTION

1. In response to the Communication dated August 29, 2005, claims 1-4 and 8-13 are active in this application.

### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

2. The information disclosure statement filed August 29, 2005 has been considered.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

3. Claims 1-4 and 8-13 are allowable over the prior art of record.  
4. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art of records does not show (in addition to other elements in the claim) the following:

- The control unit performs control such that in said erase operation the lower erase voltage is applied to a control gate of each of said nonvolatile memory cells and thereafter the higher erase voltage is applied to the control gate of each of said nonvolatile memory cells.
- The erase voltage generating unit generates, in response to a control signal supplied from said control unit, erase voltages of two or more levels to make voltages applied to tunnel films of said nonvolatile memory cells substantially constant and applies the erase voltages selectively to a control gate of each of said nonvolatile memory cells.

- During the period of said second operation, the voltage generated by said voltage generating circuit is varied twice or more, so as to keep the voltage applied to said first insulating film within a predetermined voltage range.

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the Issue Fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the Issue Fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

***Conclusion***

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael T. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-1795.

7. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-1650.



Michael T. Tran

December 12, 2005

MICHAEL TRAN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER